

# AMH *InsideOut*

## Getting a Handle on Holiday Eating

by Shannon Haselhuhn, AMH Health Education

The holiday season has snuck up on us once again. We've rolled the barbeque off of the patio, put away the lawn chairs and probably had to do some digging to locate the window scraper for the car. The days are shorter, it's chilly and dark outside, and it sounds pretty good to throw on some sweats, cuddle up with your blanket and read a good book or watch your favorite show when your workday ends. With some leftover Halloween candy tucked in the cupboard, a couple Thanksgiving potlucks on the horizon, and the smell of pumpkin spice lattes filling the air, the temptations of the holiday season begin.

With the shift in calorie balance due to decreased daily activity and increased high-calorie foods, the next two months can be a recipe for weight gain. However, there is a silver lining: weight gain over the holiday months is not inevitable, it is a choice. *You have the choice to begin 2010 at a healthier weight, and looking ahead, you have the choice to end 2010 at or near your ultimate goal weight.* Here are some tips to help get you through the holidays, and get a jump start on your 2010 health goals.

**Get rid of the Halloween candy:** The trick-or-treaters have come and gone and it's time to say goodbye to the leftovers. Donate extra candy to a [local shelter](#) or put together a care package for the troops. If you are not willing to part with the goodies, put them in the freezer for later.

**Be creative with exercise:** It is getting dark earlier, and you may feel like you are limited on your activity, but it is time to be creative. Participate in [Hanford WorkFit](#) each day at work, get a walk in at lunchtime, and set your holiday traditions to include physical activity (enjoy the [Turkey Trot](#) at Columbia Park on Thanksgiving morning).

**Don't go hungry:** Do not save up calories by skipping meals. It is much easier to pass up the goodies in the lunchroom or avoid overdoing it at the company potluck if you eat meals and snacks as usual. Eat a healthy meal before attending a holiday party, so that you are not tempted by the high-calorie food and drinks.

**Experiment with healthy recipes:** Holiday traditions often include high-calorie dishes, and large meals. While we may not be willing to budge on some of our favorites, try substituting some traditional holiday foods with a [healthy alternative recipe](#).

**Eat the healthy foods first:** When serving yourself at a buffet or dinner party, fill up on healthy foods first. That means reaching for the shrimp cocktail, vegetables and hummus or smoked salmon instead of the sausage rolls, or chips and dip. High-fiber, healthy foods can fill you up more quickly, and you'll be able to pass on or minimize the high calorie choices.

**Every bit counts:** When preparing meals, be mindful of what you nibble on while making the food.



Calories from mindless nibbling quickly add up. When preparing food, try chewing gum to prevent yourself from unnecessary sampling or have a bowl of vegetables nearby to snack on while preparing your meal.

**Enjoy your holiday favorites:** Your favorite calorie-laden holiday foods do not have to be completely off limits this season. Make an effort to enjoy them in smaller portions. A taste is usually enough to satisfy a craving without overindulging. When selecting which holiday dishes or treats that you wish to enjoy, choose those that are only available to you as a part of the holiday, like pumpkin pie or roasted turkey. Pass on extra calories from food that is around all year, such as dinner rolls or chocolate candy.

The holiday season is a time for celebration, togetherness, and giving. Enjoy your holidays with your health in mind so that you may enjoy them for many years to come. **It's your health, own it!**

**Invite AMH to be a guest at your next work group meeting.**

### November Feature Presentation:

**HEART HEALTH AND THE HANFORD WORKER:** an overview of blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, smoking, and obesity rates among Hanford workers and how they compare to Washington State and national averages.

By [Chris Hoffman](#), AMH Epidemiologist



### WATCH FOR UPCOMING EVENTS WITH AMH

#### November

[Preventive Health Challenge](#) (ends 12th)  
[Tobacco Cessation Seminar](#) (16th)

#### December

[Site Health Fairs](#)

Select a link or visit our website: [www.hanford.gov/amh](http://www.hanford.gov/amh)



# Reflections of a Quitter

by Tom Cornell, Hanford Site Employee Success Story

It is truly amazing how deeply the tendrils of addiction burrow into the mind and body. During my thirty-eight years as a nicotine addict I tried several times to quit smoking. Most were half-hearted attempts that shouldn't be counted, but three were sincere efforts that failed dismally. This, my fourth attempt, is working better than I ever expected. Of course, based on my past rate of failure, I must admit that my expectations weren't all that high. However, I have not smoked for almost nine months, been nicotine free for six months, and have every confidence that I have broken the bonds of addiction for good.

So what changed to make this attempt successful? I believe that it was the "Quit It" program and the AMH counselors that made the difference. Some would believe as I did initially that the basis of the program is the Nicotine Replacement Therapy, but I know from experience that Nicotine Replacement Therapy alone is not very effective. The advertisements and instructions on the package sound great, three "easy" steps, 1-2-3 and you're cured in six weeks. Don't believe it! It didn't work for me or by far most of the people I have known who tried it. Some were able to break the tobacco use habit, but are now stuck in perpetual Nicotine Replacement Therapy. Gum or lozenges maybe a lesser evil, but in truth the addiction goes on unabated.

Breaking the cycle of addiction goes way beyond easing the physical discomfort. Nicotine addiction changes the chemistry of your brain to the point that being high on nicotine is the only time you feel normal. When you make a conscious effort to deprive your brain of nicotine your sub-conscious will fight back with everything at its disposal. Your brain's demands for nicotine satisfaction will be manifested physically and mentally until you either give in or until the residual nicotine is flushed from your system. About three weeks after your last intake of nicotine the cravings will subside as your body heals and your brain chemistry returns to a true normal state.

I had never imagined what a complex process quitting nicotine really is, and I believe that is why I had always failed in the past. The "Quit It" program not only provides assistance with the physical effects of nicotine withdrawal, it provides mental preparation for the quitting process, counseling and coping techniques for the psychological effects and a support group of other people just like you going through the same trials. Don't believe for a minute that signing up for the program and attending the meetings will guarantee success. The program doesn't do it for you, it helps you do it for yourself. Therein lies the real key to success. How bad do you want it? If it's not worth a few weeks of discomfort to make a major change in your personal lifestyle then no program is going to work, so quit kidding yourself.



If you are really ready to quit and can make a personal commitment to follow the program, then I believe that "Quit It" is your best chance to make it happen. It worked for me and it can work for you.

Many thanks to AMH and the "Quit It" counselors.  
Tom Cornell

## "Quit It" 10-week Tobacco Cessation Support Class

**Begins the week of January 11, 2010**

Please contact Shannon Haselhuhn for more information, or to register for the program. Program space is limited, **registration is required.**

### "QUIT IT" PARTICIPANT OPINION

*"As I looked back on our classes I remember that everyone's achievements were celebrated no matter how small. I think this is important. People need something to build on and they can't build on failures. While I initially dreaded the weekly meetings I quickly realized that they were what I needed. I needed to hear people have the same struggles as me. I needed to know that some had it more difficult and some had it easier. I was normal.*

*Contrary to my fears, the weekly information was relevant and interesting. A lot of that credit goes to Shannon and Kelly but the participants were great also. Just a room full of people from every walk of life. All of us struggling with the same addiction and knowing that eventually we had to beat it."*

*-Scott Conley, Hanford Employee and "Quit It" Class participant*

## TOBACCO CESSATION EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

**November 16<sup>th</sup> @3:00pm  
AMH Room 136**

**RSVP required:  
Shannon L Haselhuhn@rl.gov  
or 376-3939**

## Healthy Recipes *Sweet Potatoes & Roasted Bananas*

**Serves 6**

### **Ingredients:**

1 1/2 pounds sweet potatoes, washed  
2 medium bananas, peeled and halved  
2 tablespoons orange juice  
1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom  
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg  
Red pepper flakes, to taste  
3 tablespoons brown sugar  
Dried parsley, for garnish

### **Preparation:**

Preheat the oven to 375 F. Lightly coat a baking dish with cooking spray. Using a fork, poke several holes in the sweet potatoes. Bake until the potatoes are soft, about 1 hour. Remove from the oven and set aside. Peel when cool to the touch. Place the banana halves in the prepared baking dish. Bake uncovered until the fruit is soft and juicy, about 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and pour the orange juice over the bananas. Stir to scrape the drippings and mash the bananas well. In a large mixing bowl, add the bananas, sweet potatoes, spices and brown sugar. Using an electric mixer, blend until smooth. Transfer to an ovenproof serving bowl and return to the oven. Bake until warmed through. Garnish with parsley and serve.

For more: [Healthy Recipes](#)

### **PER SERVING:**

Calories	142
Total Fat	trace
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	17 mg
Carbohydrate	34 g
Dietary fiber	5 g
Protein	2 g
Potassium	551 mg
Calcium	43 mg